



## **Congress of the United States**

### **House of Representatives**

July 10, 2019

The Hon. Jerrold Nadler  
Chairman, House Committee on the Judiciary  
2138 Rayburn House Office Building  
Washington, D.C. 20515

Dear Chairman Nadler:

The federal indictment of Jeffrey Epstein on July 8, 2019 by prosecutors in the Southern District of New York for sex trafficking and conspiracy to traffic underage children has rightly horrified millions. While his alleged crimes have long been well known, this indictment builds on public reporting that shows Mr. Epstein “created a vast network of underage victims for him to sexually exploit in locations including New York and Palm Beach.”<sup>1</sup> Americans are rightly demanding to know why it took so long for Mr. Epstein to be held to account. Unfortunately, that dereliction can be traced in large part to current U.S. Labor Secretary Alexander Acosta, who entered into a secret prosecutorial agreement with Mr. Epstein over a decade ago while serving as U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of Florida. Acosta’s shameful disregard for the law and those victims he was responsible for representing was a shocking breach of public trust and leaves me with no faith that he can properly enforce federal labor laws to combat human trafficking. Therefore, I respectfully urge you to commence impeachment proceedings against Secretary Acosta.

Thanks to the work of intrepid reporting, we know the full extent of Mr. Epstein’s ability to escape culpability for molesting and trafficking over 80 girls and young women since the early 2000s.<sup>2</sup> In 2007, Mr. Epstein was facing life in prison for acts of widespread sexual exploitation that stun the conscience. However, then-U.S. Attorney Acosta ignored the evidence of several witnesses who bravely came forward and gave Mr. Epstein with a non-prosecution deal that concealed Mr. Epstein’s crimes and gave immunity to his possible (and unnamed) co-conspirators, preventing future investigations. Under the agreement, Mr. Epstein was sentenced to just 13 months in a private wing of the Palm Beach County jail under minimally invasive conditions. The agreement was even kept hidden from Mr. Epstein’s victims. As you recall, I worked closely with the Judiciary Committee on legislation to reform what was an out-of-control practice of granting the powerful non- and deferred- prosecution agreements like these.<sup>3</sup> Mr. Acosta’s actions essentially let a child predator and his accomplices off scot-free, protecting criminals while disdaining their victims.

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<sup>1</sup> <https://www.justice.gov/usao-sdny/press-release/file/1181016/download>

<sup>2</sup> <https://www.miamiherald.com/news/local/article220097825.html>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/CHRG-110hhrg41190/html/CHRG-110hhrg41190.htm>

Furthermore, the U.S. District Court for the Southern District of Florida found that none of the 36 victims that came forward in 2007 were consulted during the negotiating of Secretary Acosta's agreement with Mr. Epstein.<sup>4</sup> Communications uncovered by the Miami Herald revealed the close collaboration between federal prosecutors and Mr. Epstein's legal team sought to shut out all sunlight. This devastating breach of trust shows that Secretary Acosta did not respect the victims seeking justice for credible accounts of sexual violence and human trafficking.

It is our responsibility to ensure public officials are held to the highest standards of the law. When entrusted with faithfully enforcing our anti-trafficking and other laws, Secretary Acosta did not do his job. Demands for his resignation are insufficient because it is our responsibility to hold top U.S. officials fully accountable. Resisting calls to leave, Secretary Acosta must be removed from our government by Congress.

This is an important moment. Americans are rightly fed up with the corruption endemic in this government and demanding accountability. National confidence in our government cannot exist simultaneously with the continued presence of Secretary Acosta. If Congress cannot stand up for children who have been harmed by sexual trafficking, we can stand for nothing.

Sincerely,



Bill Pascrell, Jr.  
Member of Congress

Cc: Speaker Nancy Pelosi  
Ranking Member Doug Collins

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<sup>4</sup> <https://law.justia.com/cases/federal/district-courts/florida/flsdce/9:2008cv80736/317867/435/>